

2016

Before Leaving Home for the Summer

Elizabeth Storm

Iowa State College

Follow this and additional works at: <http://lib.dr.iastate.edu/homemaker>



Part of the [Home Economics Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Storm, Elizabeth (2016) "Before Leaving Home for the Summer," *The Iowa Homemaker*: Vol. 1 : Iss. 2 , Article 9.

Available at: <http://lib.dr.iastate.edu/homemaker/vol1/iss2/9>

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Student Publications at Iowa State University Digital Repository. It has been accepted for inclusion in *The Iowa Homemaker* by an authorized editor of Iowa State University Digital Repository. For more information, please contact digirep@iastate.edu.

The Right Place for Everything

By HELEN EASTER

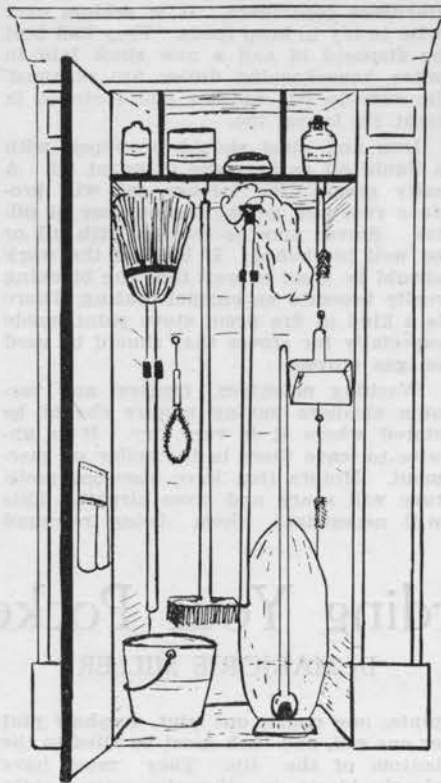
AN ELUSIVE article known as the dust cloth gives us our idea for an article this month by suggesting that time-worn maxium, "A place for everything and everything in its place."

Dustcloths, polishers, brooms and mops are the homely tools of the housekeeper. Marhsalling these to her aid she keeps her home clean and shining, a place that invites company and affords a comfortable and restful evening to the homefolks.

Because engineering the household is not the easiest task in the world is all the more reason why the housewife takes time to consider seriously those tools with which she keeps the engine in running order. Her tool box (metaphorically speaking, and meaning the cleaning closet), is therefore important from the standpoint of location, equipment and arrangement.

This tool box contains usually a varied assortment of implements to wage war on dirt and the more heterogenous the assortment the better equipped the housewife thinks she is. Moreover she finds it just as convenient to dump a tool in one closet as in another. There is no definite place for anything. But think of the steps and the time wasted; think of the ruffled state of mind that resulted from the search after the broom Mary forgot belonged on first floor, of the liquid veneer that in someone's haste was consigned to the top shelf of the cupboard last week.

A cleaning closet is one of the important conveniences to put into the new house you are building and it is preferable to have one on each floor. It need not be large. In fact a shallow closet is rather better because it is easily kept in order and there are no dark corners to be explored for missing articles. Let your closet be high enough to accomodate the brooms and to have a shelf or two above and deep enough to house a vacuum cleaner. A good size is 6 feet high by 4 feet wide by 11 inches deep.



Where You Will Find What You Are Looking For

But perhaps you haven't a new house to build and your house has no provision for such a cleaning closet. A good substitute can be made from an old wardrobe—painted white for the sake of cleanliness and with a shelf and hooks added; or, you can purchase white sectional closets from a cabinet maker.

Now for equipment. Of course you must judge your needs yourself, but avoid the mistake of not fully equip-

ping yourself in the beginning. The makeshift tools that so many housewives buy for economy's sake often do not represent true economy. Have the right tool for the special task. Your tools need not be expensive, but let the closet contain at least these simple ones:

Two pails (one with wringer for mopping).

A wall mop which can be made by tying a bag over an old broom.

A long handled dust pan.

Several kinds of cleaning brushes.

Window washer.

Duts mops and cloths.

Vacuum cleaner (if possible).

Carpet sweeper.

Shelf to hold favorite cleaning and polishing agents.

Even the best tools, however, give only about 50% efficiency if poorly arranged. A cleaning closet doesn't offer any very great problem in the matter of arrangement, but these few suggestions might help:

Let the broom and its companions have labeled hooks all their own and make no exception to returning them to their proper places. Shellacked tables will last for years.

A shoe bag tacked upon the door is a very handy receptacle for dust cloths, polishers and cleaning gloves.

It is a good plan to group the tools, that is, put things which are used together where you can conveniently put your hands on them.

All this does not seem important—and the time and energy saved seems trivial at first but it all counts up in the weekly time schedule of the household, and according to some very efficient household engineers, until the housewife realizes that her standard of equipment and her arrangement of it constitute about two-thirds of her household work problem she has not started on the business of housekeeping.

Before Leaving Home for the Summer

By ELIZABETH STORM

"IT TAKES days and sometimes weeks for me to get the house back in working order after having been gone on even a short summer vacation," said little Mrs. White one morning as she sat by her kitchen table discussing vacation plans with a new neighbor who had dropped in for a chat. "I declare that when I do get away for a summer outing I can't enjoy myself for wondering just what particular calamity awaits me when I get home. If the kitchen pipes, by some act of providence haven't rusted, then my silver has tarnished so badly that I must scour for hours to clean it, or an army of ants have installed themselves in the ice box and I must wage a kerosene battle for months to get rid of them," she sighed.

"I used to feel that way myself," replied the new neighbor, "for we always

rushed off in such a hurry in the summer that I never seemed to have time to put the house in order, or to take the simple precautions that I should have taken. But a few years ago we returned from a several weeks auto trip to find that our house had been literally flooded in our absence by a bathroom faucet which we decided had been forced open by pressure from the main, (though I know that every member of the family has a guilty feeling that he may have left it open himself in the rush before leaving). And now, before we leave home we go over the house as if we were house cleaning, and take every precaution that we can. It takes several days to do this properly but we enjoy our vacation much more and have no doubt saved ourselves many minor troubles if not a few floods and fires,"

she finished smiling.

The new neighbor isn't the only housewife who has decided that leaving a house unoccupied for any length of time without taking special precautions is too great a risk. Before leaving home the business like housekeeper will see that all details of cleaning and storing are carried out and that nothing is left in a condition to be regretted later.

The house, of course, will be thoroly cleaned that no dirt remains to attract vermin. All portieres and other heavy hangings should be aired, brushed and put away from moths and dust. Lace and net curtains had best be washed and put away rough dry ready to be starched stretched and finished when the house is again reopened. All woolens must be aired and laid away from the moths.

If the housewife has a quantity of

silver she will want to leave it in a safe deposit vault but in any event it must be well stored. The cotton flannel bags in which most silver is purchased are a great protection to the pieces stored in them. If these are not at hand, the clever needle woman can easily make her own according to her needs. Jewelers use red, gray or green cotton flannel, not white because the chemical used to bleach the white material often causes silver to darken. Silver stored in these bags retain their brightness if wrapped so no two pieces touch. A few pieces of gum camphor placed in the drawer, chest or bag will retard the formation of the tarnish.

Rugs should be rolled to prevent creasing and put away as woollens. Upholstered furniture should have a thorough brushing and beating with a soft beater, or better still, cleaned with a vacuum cleaner. This kind of furniture is best covered with newspaper as a special precaution against moths.

Pictures having no glass or gilt frames may be covered with fine net or muslin as is usual with oil paintings. Any very thin oil as lemon oil may be wiped over gilt chandeliers and brass bed

steads. Oil prevents the shellac from hardening and cracking or perhaps peeling off and rust spots from forming on the unprotected metal.

All good housekeepers will put all food which will keep into the proper sterilized containers. It is seldom ever wise to try to keep foods. They had best be disposed of and a new stock laid in when housekeeping duties are resumed. Be sure to put candles and matches in tight tin boxes, too.

Iron and steel should be wiped with a liquid oil as kerosene or sweet oil. A salty grease like kitchen fat will produce rust and defeat the purpose of oiling. Stoves may be treated with oil or be well blackened. If blacked the work should be done so well that the blacking really becomes an enamel coating. There is a kind of fire proof stove paint, made especially for stoves that should be used on gas stoves.

Washing machines, ironers and vacuum cleaners having motors should be stored where it is very dry. It is unwise to leave them in the cellar or basement. Motors that have absorbed moisture will spark and cross circuit. This will necessitate them being rewound

which will cost a considerable sum, far exceeding the trouble of removing to a dry place in the beginning.

All flush closets and traps under wash basins and other fixtures should be thoroughly flooded with carbolic acid water, strong soap suds or hot washing soda solution. The latter is probably the most familiar to the housewife and may be used in the ratio of one to two pounds of soda to a gallon of water. If this is done the last thing before closing the house, the soda water not only goes down the pipes but some of it remains in the traps.

To prevent evaporation of this water in the traps a heavy piece of paper may be pasted over the tops of the basins but the best way is to pour about one-half cupful of sweet oil into each trap. Be sure that the house inlet pipe is turned off and all house pipes drained so that no one can draw water and no faucet can be forced open by pressure from the main.

Lastly all keys should be collected and each one labeled with a tag so there may be no mistaken identity when the family comes trooping in to the best place after all—Home.

Safeguarding Your Pocket Book

By MARJORIE MILLER

DO I PAY dollars extra to my butcher, grocer and milkman each year or do I get value received?

This is a question which if raised by every housewife in Iowa might arouse some startling facts. Undoubtedly there are many who do not know the specific sizes of milk bottles, berry boxes and like containers. Probably just as many do not know that Iowa has a weight and measure law enacted in order to insure the people of the state honest weights and honest measures in the commodities which they buy and sell.

Obviously the first requisite for correct quantity is a correct apparatus for weighing or measuring. But this alone will not protect the housewife, for inaccuracies and fraud can easily creep in and the careless purchaser will be the victim.

Every dealer can not be condemned because of the dishonesty of a few and yet every housewife can probably recall some commodity she has purchased of her tried and true grocer which has just failed the standard. She knows he is honest. Then who is at fault? Both of course, but who shall do the checking up?

The purchaser who knows the correct amount for each weight and measure can easily verify his purchases and demand correct quantities. According to the weights and measures law of Iowa all berry boxes must be made to hold one quart, one pint or one-half pint dry measure. This sounds perfectly sane. Where does the catch come? Before this law was passed many berry boxes were made to hold liquid measure quarts and pints. This is where the difference comes. A dry quart contains 9.5 cubic inches or 16% more than a liquid quart.

In regard to milk bottles, the law requires all milk and cream bottles to be of a capacity of one-half gallon, three

pints, one quart, one pint, one-half pint or one gill, and each must be filled to the bottom of the lip. They must have clearly blown or otherwise permanently marked in the side, the capacity of the bottle, and on the bottom the name, initial or trademark of the manufacturer and designing number, which designating number shall be different for each manufacturer.

Dry measure shall be of a capacity of one bushel or multiple of a bushel and shall be made of metal, well dried wood or composition, or similar and suitable material of sufficient strength and rigidity to withstand ordinary usage without becoming materially warped, bent, dented, distorted or otherwise damaged.

These factors may sound like a lot of red tape, yet who doesn't remember the bent and dented measure, which prevailed for many years in the grocery store frequented by you and your friends.

Further in the Iowa laws we find that all sales of grapes, other fruits and vegetables in Climax baskets shall be made in baskets conforming to the United States standard, until that standard is changed by the congress of the United States. The standard Climax baskets are then the two-quart basket, the four-quart baskets, and twelve-quart baskets, respectively.

In former days very few knew the number of pounds of apples, onions, potatoes or parsnips to the bushel, but now every intelligent housewife demands 48 pounds of apples or 60 pounds of potatoes to the bushel. If she doesn't know the weight for every commodity somewhere in her desk or filing cabinet she has a list like the following to which she can readily refer:

This housewife will not buy by the package or pail but will buy by definite terms. Furthermore, she will verify her purchases with correct scales or meas-

ures and she will not, without cause, condemn nor criticize her dealer. If she has complaints she will make them to the state dairy and food commission where they will be treated confidentially. Through her co-operation and the co-operation of her dealer honest weights and measures may become a reality.

WEIGHTS AS PROVIDED BY THE LAWS OF IOWA

	1 bu.	1 pk.	1 qt.
	lbs.	lbs.	ozs.
Apples	48	12	24
Apples, dried	24	6	12
Beans, green	56	14	28
Beans, dry	60	15	30
Beans, lima	56	14	28
Beets	56	14	28
Carrots	50	12½	25
Cherries	40	10	20
Corn meal	48	12	24
Cucumbers	48	12	24
Grapes, stems	40	10	20
Hickory nuts, hulled..	50	12½	25
Onions	52	13	26
Onion top sets.....	28	7	14
Onion bottom sets ..	32	8	16
Parsnips	45	11¼	22½
Peaches	48	12	24
Peaches, dried	33	8¼	16½
Peanuts	22	5½	11
Pears	45	11¼	22½
Peas, unshelled	50	12½	25
Peas, dried	60	15	30
Plums	48	12	24
Pop corn, cob	70	17¼	35
Pop corn, shelled ..	56	14	28
Potatoes	60	15	30
Quinces	48	12	24
Rutabagas	60	15	30
Sweet corn	50	12½	25
Sweet potatoes	50	12½	25
Tomatoes	50	12½	25
Turnips	55	13¾	27½
Walnuts	50	12½	25
All root crops not specified above	50	12½	25